

VZCZCXYZ0011
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHKO #4674/01 2780211
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 050211Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8292
INFO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUENAAA/SECNAV WASHINGTON DC
RUENAAA/CNO WASHINGTON DC
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI
RHOVVKG/COMSEVENTHFLT
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RHMFISS/USFJ

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 004674

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

OSD/APSA FOR SHINN/SEDNEY/HILL/BASALLA; USFJ FOR
J00/J01/J3/J5

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/03/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: JAPAN PREPARING NEW OEF LEGISLATION

Classified By: CDA Joseph R. Donovan; Reasons: 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The Japanese government is preparing the text of a new Anti-Terror Special Measures Law to authorize the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Forces (MSDF) to continue providing fuel to coalition forces engaged in OEF Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO). MOFA Foreign Policy Bureau Deputy Director General Kazuyoshi Umemoto told visiting DASD for East Asia David Sedney that the new law would be much narrower in scope than the existing one. Non-OEF MIO operations, for example, would not be possible under the new legislation. Umemoto said that the Japanese government would share an outline of the new law with opposition parties on October 5. DASD Sedney cautioned that adding additional restrictions to the use of MSDF-provided fuel will decrease the effectiveness of Japan's OEF mission. He also underscored the importance of explaining to the Diet and public that U.S. vessels engaged in OEF missions often conduct multiple operations, some non-OEF, at the same time. Separately, Rep. Taku Yamasaki, chair of the ruling coalition's task force on the Anti-Terror Law, told Sedney that the government faces an uphill battle to pass the new law during the current session. End Summary.

¶2. (C) On October 3, MOFA Foreign Policy Bureau DDG Umemoto shared with visiting DASD for East Asia Sedney an outline of the government's proposal for a new Anti-Terror Special Measures Law to authorize MSDF operations in support of OEF. Umemoto said that the text has not been finalized, but added that the government is already in active consultations with ruling coalition party members over the contents of the bill. He stated that the outline would be provided to opposition parties on October 5.

Limited Scope

¶3. (C) Umemoto noted that the new law would be significantly narrower in scope than the existing Special Measures Law. Unlike the current legislation, which expires on November 1, the new law would explicitly limit Japan's support to OEF to the MSDF refueling operation. New missions, such as providing helicopter lift in Afghanistan, would require new, separate legislation. Umemoto noted that under the current Anti-Terror Law, the Diet must approve both extensions of the

framework law and each specific mission. The new law would enable the OEF MIO operation to continue with only one Diet vote, and would be valid for a full two years.

14. (C) Umemoto asserted that Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba, for political reasons, has pressed for new limits on the MSDF OEF operation. In addition to more strictly monitoring that Japanese fuel is only being used for OEF MIO missions, Ishiba has advocated a ban on supplying coalition oilers. DASD Sedney cautioned that Japan should carefully consider adding new limits to the MSDF mission. In addition to degrading the effectiveness of the MSDF operation, asserting that Japanese oil will only be used for OEF may be misleading. Naval vessels, especially aircraft carriers, are often engaged in multiple operations at the same time. Some will be in support of OEF and others may not. Umemoto acknowledged the importance of providing accurate information, but commented that the multi-mission concept may be difficult to explain to the public.

Public Opinion Key

15. (C) Umemoto highlighted recent positive trends in public support for the OEF mission, but added that support rates may need to surpass 60 percent (from the current 50 percent range) before the ruling coalition feels confident enough to override an Upper House veto of the new Anti-Terror Law. Umemoto said that the coalition has 17-seats more than the required Lower House supermajority. However, members of the junior coalition partner Komei party, and even some in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), may hesitate to vote down a veto if public opinion is not fully behind the government. Separately, LDP Rep. Taku Yamasaki, chairman of the ruling coalition's Anti-Terror Law task force, told DASD Sedney that, despite his personal support, he was not optimistic about passage of the law in the current Diet session given the uncertain political situation.

DONOVAN